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BIRTHPLACE OF WILLIAM BRADFORD. AUSTERFIELD, ENGLAND.

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Made in the United States of America

The Gorham Press, Boston, U. S. A.

TO ALL DESCENDANTS OF

WILLIAM BRADFORD

AND TO ALL WHO ADMIRE THIS LEADER OF NEW ENGLAND'S FOUNDERS
THIS CONCISE AND UNPRETENTIOUS RECORD OF HIS LIFE AND ACTS IS

D E D I C A T E D

IN THE HOPE THAT BY
HIS EXAMPLE WE MAY BE INSPIRED AND
STRENGTHENED, THE BETTER TO DO OUR OWN PART
IN NOBLE LIVING AND IN PRIVATE AND
PUBLIC ACHIEVEMENTS

PREFACE

It is a pleasing task to record afresh the life course of one of those whom the poet Whittier characterized as "the noblest ancestry that ever a people looked back to with love and reverence."

The leading authorities, particularly the Pilgrim narrators themselves and those more nearly contemporary with them, have contributed to this biography. Though early Plymouth events and the career of Bradford are inseparably connected, the colonial history is here limited and made subservient to the personal consideration, with regret that there do not appear more obtainable data of this nature. Undoubtedly the Governor's modest reticence largely accounts for this. We can only be thankful that we have what we have.

ALBERT H. PLUMB.

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WILLIAM BRADFORD
OF PLYMOUTH

WILLIAM BRADFORD OF PLYMOUTH

I

THE BOY

Earth's transitory things decay,
Its pomps, its pleasures pass away;
But the sweet memory of the good
Survives in the vicissitude.

J. Bowring.

THE world has nothing more worthy of our regard than its unconscious heroes. Though many can discern their own true importance, a peculiar charm invests such as do not realize it, even if they are told. They seem to think others would have done better in their place, and they lightly estimate their services, at less than their fellow-men accredit them. His ideal of duty captivates the doer more than his own agency therein. The noblest men are made by the contemplation of their models. Like the great Apostle, they are not disobedient unto the

heavenly vision. Among earth's worthies, modest and unconscious of greatness, there stands the figure of William Bradford.

We find him first as a native of Austerfield, England, on the south border of Yorkshire. There is no official record of his birth. But in addition to his own declaration of age when first married, the clearly legible record of his baptism, March 19, 1589, would indicate that by the modern calendar he was born in 1590. The garments worn by him at the chapel March 19-29, being a short white linen covering and mitts which came for exhibition to Essex Institute in Salem, Massachusetts, are the apparel of a small babe.

The affirmation of Bradford, as a man thoroughly established in his integrity and his accuracy of statement, this declaration in the important matter of his marriage contract when he was required to subscribe his own signature, must be accepted as more weighty than the opinions given by others regarding his age in later years of his life, and the posthumous inscription placed long afterward on his monument. It is unlikely that he was consulted about his age, for any future epitaph, since even the necessary making of his will was deferred to the day of his death. Not long before his nuptials on December 10-20, 1613, he averred that he was twenty-three; and, supposing an error of his quite improbable here, our conclusion appears justified that he was born in 1590

by the Gregorian calendar. We also have no reason to doubt an old claim that his natal month was the same as his baptismal, March. Besides, the rule existed then, that the rite should be administered one week after birth. If this contemporary custom was followed, William saw the light of day March 12, 1589, by Old Style, or March 22, 1590, New Style.

It is unfortunate that the baptismal font, despite efforts to purchase it back, has not yet, to our knowledge, been yielded by the Methodist church in Lound, Nottinghamshire, and restored to its proper place at Saint Helen's in Austerfield. The Austerfield font at present we do not accept as the genuine original. That original one at Saint Helen's about the time of our Civil War seems to have been a victim to the generally weaker antiquarian interest then, and it was replaced by a high basin. It came back soon but evidently was unused, lying upon the floor aside. Then a sexton was ordered to take out and sell superfluous articles. After resting on an estate as a garden stone, it was given to a lady from Austerfield, who loaned it indefinitely to the church mentioned. It is a large Norman bowl, rough-hewn and of ancient aspect, which when in use was for convenience set upon a wooden block.

When the tolling bells above the small stone chapel summoned the Bradford family and friends to the solemn service, little did they discern, with all their natural affection, any unusual significance in that

consecration of a life to be expended far from the quiet hamlet of old England in a growing community of New England.

As the child came to an age of sufficient understanding, how strongly must this humble shrine have appealed to him, with the development of his proclivities guided by one circumstance after another! It was erected during the twelfth century, in the centre of the village, when the rustic parish was presented by a person of rank for the support of a chaplain. Doubtless the lad's eyes often scrutinized the zigzag Norse symbol of lightning, and other ornamentation, carved upon the double arch under which he was wont to enter.

The whole region was rich in historic interest to any reflective mind. It was the battle ground of Briton, Roman and Anglo-Saxon. It formed the heart of the Danish territory, opposite their native continental shores. The Robin Hood marauders operated through this sparsely settled North of England, where the last of several uprisings against the South was attempted only about a score of years before Bradford's birth. The people were comparatively rude and uneducated, with few schools; and papal influence yielded more slowly away from the governmental headquarters. If Mary Queen of Scots had not been executed shortly before the Puritan churches arose, it is difficult to see how or when they could have lived so near her seat of power. But

Elizabeth, in her laudable aim to uplift the nation by improving the people and repressing the nobles, encouraged the incoming of tens of thousands of Dutch, of whom many flocked to the fair lowlands east and north, imparting their tolerant ideas, bestowing names upon numerous localities, and producing a marked effect in the speech and blood of the inhabitants. The Queen required every family of Hollanders to take an English apprentice in their imported arts and crafts. Thus England changed rapidly from a country merely agricultural to one also manufacturing, where industry was pursued in weaving cloth and in glass, pottery, iron and various metals, wrought not in factories at first but in private houses as once was commonly done in New England.

The religious effect of this immigration was not in the royal reckoning; for much as Elizabeth hated the papacy, she despised its counterpart, as quite too good for her liking, namely, the body of her subjects which represented an intelligent faith, and holy practice according to the accepted dictates of a revered, studied and intensely cherished Sacred Scripture. Though she could do no more than patronize, from political motives, any order of spiritual devotion as long as she herself would not learn to love devoutly, she failed to realize that the infusion of the virile Puritan element, regardless of racial strain, in the field of religion saved her authorized church from relapsing into Romanism. Her suc-

cessor, James, was a fit son of Mary of Scotland, in his intolerance towards Puritans, Protestants though they were.

Austerfield itself, though having less than three hundred residents, was the scene of a great session in 702, when the Archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops of almost all England met with King Aldfrid to hear the complaint of Wilfred the Bishop of York, who was so ardent a Romanist that the former king had deposed him. The English under Aldfrid won against the papal party, but before the venerable Wilfred died he was restored to office and canonized, and the first Puritan assembly after coming to Ccrooby gathered awhile in a stone church named for him.

Bradford's native town also, despite its quiet rural beauty, lay upon the Great Northern Road to Scotland, as now on the railroad named after it the express comes thundering by from the grimy granite houses of Edinboro, bound for the mighty metropolis before midnight of the afternoon it started. But the old dirt road was only a few feet wide, almost a stranger to horse-drawn vehicles, especially pleasure carriages, even the ladies of the Elizabethan era using mostly their mounts, as those in America later rode on their pillions.

More agreeable, locally, were the meadow paths along the Idle, and other leisurely streams of this boy's neighborhood. His family name was originally

applied to those who lived at some convenient Broad Ford, many desirable crossings having some descriptive or defining term, like Ox Ford and Cam Bridge.

His taste for Latin might well have been intensified by the very name of his Austerfield, which, earlier than the Anglo-Saxon localities, was probably named for the imperial Roman commander Ostorius, who had a defensive earthwork at his station near here. Its remains attested its military importance. And though the northern peasantry in young William's time were so untutored or morally lax, or both, that they were unacquainted with even their English Bible, it is not strange if these historical associations induced the more intelligent and refined yeomen to possess Latin books. It has been supposed that his own family owned them, with English works, all of which were rare and costly; and in addition to this likelihood, it is known that Rev. Mr. Silvester of Alkly had a classical collection in his own library. As this clergyman was a family friend and the guardian of William's cousins, the Austerfield boy would naturally become a visitor at the neighboring parsonage.

Wills and records indicate that the Bradfords in general were of good repute and moved in the best society of that too decadent period. The Austerfield branch were yeomen, once so important in the English commons that they ranked next to the gentry.

At the north end of the village the house still

stands which tradition claims as our Bradford's birthplace. It is of substantial brick, exceedingly rare in his day and a sign of social distinction. Many houses of the time were quite attractive in appearance with their red roofs, green shutters and yellow doorsteps. This is a ruddy cottage from fluted tiling down to the grass, and sufficiently large to comprise two tenements now.

The boy's grandfather William and maternal grandfather John Hanson were the only mentioned owners of property in their small town in 1575, and he inherited in time a good patrimony. His father William died in 1591, his mother Alice soon after, and the paternal grandfather, in whose care he was left, expired not until January of 1596, the only ancestor the third William would be likely to remember. Then the simple life and talk of the farm ceased, on the part of those who would converse with the lad on their common interests and show the most of natural affection toward him. The charge over his life by his uncles Thomas and Robert was one of legal imposition rather than a matter of love. Robert naturally wished him to be a farmer, but permitted him to study when he proved not very rugged at first.

Before he was twelve, an illness of long continuance coming upon him, youthful intelligence and spiritual sensitiveness were developed in him untroubled by temptations more liable in physical vigor. Denied

the warmth of family affection, and for a season the wholesome sports of youth, while naturally made more serious also as an orphan, the boy delighted in the contemplation of religious truth, particularly in Bible study; and this became with him a lifelong habit.

Over the line in Nottinghamshire a few miles away, lay another small town, Scrooby, where one William Brewster was postmaster, well qualified as a collegiate and public official, to teach history and civil government. He occupied an ancient manor and commodious hostelry which royalty had twice coveted. Within its spacious halls were wont to gather a few earnest souls who were discontented with the empty formalism so common in religious profession at that time, and they were restive under the superabundant authority of the state in church matters. They insisted on freedom of the individual conscience, from either civil or ecclesiastical domination, and were also convinced that genuine Christianity called for a Christlike life. This was nothing less than Puritanism, which as a term was originally coined by its foes in contempt, but later became a name of honor and glory. Though long in preparing, since Wycliffe gave to the English people the Holy Scriptures in their own familiar speech, this movement was only now coming to its full fruition; and the group of earnest worshipers in Scrooby, who had first organized at Gainsboro in 1602, composed the

earliest Puritan church to stand and prosper, others following in a multitude as the cause gained momentum.

Brewster was made Elder at Scrooby, and the boy Bradford was one of the charter members. He accepted the instruction of kind friends who were glad to satisfy his eager thirst for spiritual knowledge. Conspicuous among these was Rev. Richard Clyfton of Babworth, who ministered to the new church for a short time until their permanent pastor was secured, the devout and learned John Robinson. But before the church was formed in Gainsboro and Scrooby, when Bradford was hardly twelve he walked every Sunday over the fields to Babworth, six or seven miles from Austerfield, joining Brewster at Scrooby on the way. The Elder was made Postmaster in the year his future Governor was born, and the two Williams were lifelong intimates. Religiously he was like a father to the boy.

With this unchecked expansion of his soul, young William's intellect was also awakened. Though at first forbidden advanced schooling, he became a self-taught man, a thoughtful student of history, philosophy and theology, proficient also in linguistics, as the classic Latin and Greek, and late in life, the original Hebrew of the Old Testament.

His joining with the Separatists from the Established State Church of England was an act which offended his relatives and early acquaintances, who

tried in vain to make him abandon his stand; for he could not, consistently with his convictions, comply with their desires. It was observed that "neither could the wrath of his uncles, nor the scoff of his neighbors, now turned upon him as one of the Puritans, divert him from his pious inclinations. Thus he answered them, "To keep a good conscience and walk in such a way as God has prescribed in his word is a thing which I shall prefer above you all, and above life itself."

Government officers soon discovered this company of Dissenters, stopped their meetings, and proceeded to make arrests. In the autumn of 1607 when seventeen years of age, Bradford and his associates endeavored to go over to Holland, where religious liberty was allowed. He was one of the chief advocates of this measure. But the ship master that was to take them betrayed their plan to the authorities, who sent the Puritans into prison at Boston in Lincolnshire. Next spring the same attempt was made, unsuccessfully again; for their rulers neither granted them freedom at home nor emigration abroad. But before that year of 1608 passed, the victims of persecution escaped one after another, by various means, across the water to Amsterdam. Bradford's ship encountered a seven days' storm and was driven out of its course hundreds of miles, close to Norway, even the mariners giving up in despair. The Pilgrims remained calm, though un-

used to the sea; and our hero was heard to repeat in prayer, with his companions, "Yet, Lord, thou canst save."

On reaching Holland, an envious passenger accused him as having fled from England as a culprit, and he was taken before the magistrates, who, however, willingly released him when the truth was known.

Leyden was the Pilgrims' rendezvous. The place was congenial to the ardent spirit of this youth, and he became a student at the University there. He must have heard in England as a boy, how the martyr John Bradford, chaplain to Edward VI and one of the most acceptable preachers in the realm, because of his religious principles had been burned to death, in the reign of Bloody Mary. And the people of Leyden could recite for sympathetic ears, the tales of heroic and successful resistance against King Philip of Spain only thirty years before these Puritan refugees from intolerance arrived.

William now went about to earn a living. As an apprentice to a French Protestant, he learned the trade of dying silk, and doubtless, beside his Dutch, acquired here his thorough familiarity with the French language so widely used even in those days.

II

THE PILGRIM

The best inheritance they have left us is the New England conscience. The Puritan's habit of self-examination and prayer has left its impress on the habit of thought of the great nation that has risen where he showed the way.

Governor Guild of Massachusetts, at the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Calvin, in Geneva, Switzerland, July 9, 1909.

Religious faith must ever be the motive power of humanity, and whatever might become of despotism, with or without, it is absolutely essential to democracy.

Governor Hughes of New York, at the Champlain Tercentenary, Vermont, July 9, 1909.

Religion is the only thing upon which to rest our salvation in these times. It is religious principles to which our Commonwealth owes its greatness.

Governor Calvin Coolidge of Massachusetts, at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Lord's Day League, Boston, 1920.

ON reaching the age of twenty-one, our Bradford became the possessor of his native estate in

England, which he sold, as then useless for him to hold. But well he knew, that the recantation of his faith would restore him to independence and presumably to the favor of the Austerfield community. What lay in the future for him he could not conceive. He took the sale money and ventured in some commercial enterprise, but did not prosper in it. His career was to be of more importance than the business of a merchant.

After turning twenty-two, he was admitted, on proof and security, a citizen of Leyden, as William Bradford, Englishman. In the end of the next year his marriage bans were published, and he was registered as a worker in fustian, a coarse cloth of cotton and flax. On December 20, 1613, he wedded Dorothy May, aged sixteen, formerly of Cambridge, and probably the granddaughter of John May, Bishop of Carlisle in 1577. Her autograph, "Dority May," appears in her marriage contract. Bradford, when in America later, had friendly correspondence with her father in Holland.

While in Leyden now, he had the joy of perceiving the rapid growth of the Puritan fellowship there, numbering finally almost three hundred. Purchasing considerable land, they settled in a community by themselves. Robinson, their spiritual head, was held in much esteem throughout the city, for his noble character and fine abilities. Bradford in written

eulogy ascribes to him "ye tender love & godly care of a true pastor."

Yet in spite of the hospitality of Holland, the condition was not normal nor the prospects ideal, for an English settlement among those of foreign speech. The rising generation would naturally affiliate with their neighbors, entering the Dutch army and society; and the outcome promised to be a blend of blood and customs. The truce between Holland and Spain would be over in 1619; and the Thirty Years War was already rising in Europe. Wishing to preserve their national character and distinct religious order, they meditated emigration as a colony. In this the foreign missionary motive was also strong, freely acknowledged, and always remembered. "A great hope & inward zeall they had," Bradford later recorded, "of laying some good foundation, or at least to make some way thereunto, for ye propagating & advancing ye gospell of ye kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of ye world; yea, though they should be but even as stepping-stones unto others for ye performing of so great a work."

They were dissuaded from the tropical enticements of Spanish American neighborhoods by the recollection of Spain's interests and ambitions there. The vote was indeed close, to go to any part of the strange western world; and our hero, being in favor

of it, may have been required to turn the hesitating weight of opinion that way.

But if residence in the British dominion, near or far, was preferable, some sort of recognition by the English government was necessary. This was a hard thing to secure, yet King James finally gave a reluctant verbal consent to their desired settlement in some remoter territory, where they would afford him and his servile clericals the least annoyance, while helping to establish the empire as respectable and industrious citizens.

Royal toleration having been cautiously granted, the next task was to secure financial patronage. It was a task indeed, yet the Pilgrims, as these Separatist Puritans now called themselves, were happy in finding not only creditors who risked loans for mercantile considerations solely, but distinguished persons who were in sympathy with their Christian zeal and purity, as Sir Robert Naunton, Secretary of State to the King, and particularly Sir Edwin Sandys, a most worthy and influential man. For three years, however, the business negotiations dragged on, whose dreary details we will not rehearse, between the Puritans with their friends on one side, and on the other the failing or insecure London and old Plymouth colonial companies, the proffered Dutch sponsors whose kindness nevertheless looked to the Hudson and New Amsterdam, and finally the company of Merchant Adventurers, to

whom the enterprising but unscrupulous Thomas Weston introduced the Pilgrims. He was useful to them in this crisis, because he procured their financial backing and made possible the journey to America. This benefit Bradford never forgot, despite all the falsehood, treachery, and ingratitude which Weston developed, who almost caused the ruin of the undertaking after he was weary of it and involved in difficulties through his mismanagement.

The colonial plan was that the younger and more able of the Leyden community should go overseas at first, to prepare the way for the others; and it was well that Bradford and the most of his fellow-voyagers had the advantage of youthful prime, for the stern days of pioneering.

The parting from their friends, on the embarkation at Delft Haven, was a sad experience, between the doubtful attractiveness of a distant savage land and the fact that it was likely to be, as it proved, a final leavetaking for many. Pastor Robinson, on his knees at the quay, poured out fervent petitions for their comrades about to go, commending them to divine protection. So affecting was the scene, that even the Dutch strangers beholding were moved to tears. Our Forefather wrote concerning this, "so they left the goodly and pleasant city, which had been their resting-place near twelve years; but they knew they were pilgrims, and looked not much on those things, but lift up their eyes to the heavens,

their dearest country and quieted their spirits."

The Speedwell which conveyed them came in a few days to Southampton, to find the Mayflower from London waiting for them, with their brethren of England. Picture the youthful adventurers in their ardor to set forth as pioneers to a land of comparative freedom. But the sailing was badly delayed, to their weariness and loss, while they protested against impossible terms of subservience to the Merchant Adventurers, who would have deprived the prospective planters of their independence. Then a hundred pounds extra was required "to clear things at their going away"; and to raise this amount they had to sell some of their provisions, their leather for mending shoes, swords, muskets, much armor and various things seemingly indispensable.

Before setting sail, a letter was received from Pastor Robinson, in which he mingled encouragement and sound counsel, urging them to fortify their souls by prayer, to preserve unity, exercise mutual patience and forbearance in their close relationship, and to submit to their own rules and chosen officers. Other wise advice was opportunely given, which was well received and profitably followed.

About the middle of August the colonists launched forth. But their relief on going was short, for, by enough evidence and subsequent confession, the Speedwell was tampered with by her false and tim-

orous Captain Reynolds, so that the vessels put back to port for another tedious period, eleven days, ostensibly for repairs. Starting a second time, Reynold's ship sprang a leak again, and though three hundred miles out they were obliged to return. The creeping Speedwell was therefore abandoned, her passengers and cargo transferred to the Mayflower according to that larger ship's capacity; and after much kindness and acceptable entertainment by certain friends at old Plymouth, the Pilgrims, one hundred and two in number, ventured out the third time, and not in vain. This was September 6, or 16 by New Style.

Mild weather and favoring winds were theirs at first, and the equinoctial rudeness tarried till the voyagers were nearly halfway across the Atlantic. Then they paid dearly for the wicked delays imposed upon them, for a succession of storms soon broke upon them in October. The west wind rushed upon them from the American north coasts, as if to forbid their approach. The mariners were once more in doubt about proceeding, as the upper works were strained, and a main beam amidships had cracked and bent. But by means of a huge iron screw, it was restored to position; and the discontented crew stood to their duty, since also the western shore was about as near as England. Sometimes drifting under bare poles over high seas, the top-heavy, overloaded vessel nevertheless refused to

founder, and late in October fair weather returned.

After dawn one November morning they sighted land, and recognized Cape Cod, well known to previous mariners. This landfall was evidently the Highlands of Truro. Steering south-west while well out, they encountered the shoals off Chatham, at the elbow of the Cape, and resolved to abandon the run under New England to the Hudson. Captain Jones practically took the matter into his own hands, and conveyed the sea-weary voyagers back and around the tip of the Cape, anchoring in the nearest available harbor, at present Provincetown, on Saturday, November 21, New Style.

Bradford says that before entering the harbor, they drew up a compact as "ye first foundation of their governments in this place," to which he and all the men of the incipient Colony affixed their signatures. This classic document of essential democracy was a swift and prudent precaution against insubordination, which a few ultra-independent souls had threatened to show, declaring that on landing they would do as they pleased, since in New England they were not under the authority of their patent for Virginia. It was English territory, however, and in the beginning of the statement they professed themselves "loyal subjects" of King James. Better to have the protection of an unsympathetic sovereign than to become the prey of a lawless and irresponsible anarchy. Thus "before they came ashore," they secured them-

selves against despotism's opposite extreme. It was a timely act, done on the day of debarkation.

The Mayflower boxed the compass, rounding the tip of the Cape and feeling her way in the circular harbor there. The inner beaches are shallow, and it seems even the longboat, though launched three-quarters of a mile off, could not be brought near the strand. The men were obliged to wade a bow-shot or two, landing at the insular Long Point, toward the sea, and carrying back to the boat swamp-cedar, as fire-wood aboard was gone. The exposure caused illness at this season, which with later aggravations proved fatal to some. Bradford escaped the "lung woe," but contracted an acute and critical form of rheumatism, or confirmed it after the chilly discomforts of the bunks and the sweeping gales of the voyage.

Yet despite this prolonged cold foot-bath in American brine, he records that "being thus arrived in a good harbor, and brought safe to land; they fell upon their knees and blessed ye God of heaven; who had brought them over ye vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all ye periles and miseries thereof; againe to set their feete on ye firm and stable earth, theire proper element."

Though the Mayflower must have anchored before noon on Saturday, the first full day after arrival was Sunday, and these Pilgrims strangers had an opportunity to refresh themselves and prepare their

souls for the strenuous business ahead. Also throughout that initial week of life in America, the weather was mellow and open. Several weeks were required for repairing the colonists' shallop, which was a means of more delay in the already very late season. But meanwhile, on the last Wednesday of November an exploring party started out with Capt. Jones and some seamen; and in the afternoon sixteen intending settlers followed, armed and under command of Myles Standish, Masters Bradford, Hopkins and Edward Tilley "being joined to him for council." They saw Indians, whom they followed for several miles, but could not come up with them. Finding much corn buried, they brought some of it to the ship and later paid the natives for it, after using it for seed. But in this and another trip on the narrow part of the Cape, they discovered no locality which suited them for settlement.

As December came in, the protracted mildness changed to a sudden and intense cold, the ground freezing to a foot's depth, wind and snow also impeding their operations, while in the boats the congealed spray on their coats looked like a covering of glass. To add to the awkwardness of the situation, Capt. Jones threatened to put ashore the whole company with their families and scanty possessions, and return to England at once because of the late season and his diminishing food supply, unless they succeeded in finding a place for habitation. At this

juncture Second Mate Coppin suggested that they look for a harbor somewhere around in Cape Cod Bay, which he remembered visiting on a fishing vessel. Accordingly, when December was now half through, ten of the Pilgrims, including Bradford, went in their repaired shallop with eight mariners, in search of that location, skirting the inner shores.

They camped the first night on the south of the Bay, building a barricade of logs and boughs, as a shelter also against the wind, open on one side with a fire in the centre. Their defense was useful, for unawares they had come close to a settlement of Nauset Indians, a tribe which had suffered cruelty at the hands of infamous Capt. Hunt who kidnapped some of them and sold them abroad as slaves. Intent on revenge, they approached within hearing of the English sentry, about midnight; but on his raising the alarm, they made no attack then, and the voyagers returned to their needed sleep, not being sure whether the noise was caused by man or beast.

On awakening Friday morning, December 18, they united in prayer for heavenly leading and protection, and encouraged one another. While breakfast was preparing, some of them went down to put their muskets in the shallop, but on the remonstrance of a few who retained their arms, the rest were laid on the bank above the boat. They had no sooner returned to their camp than they were startled by the ringing war-whoop, and one of their own number

came running from the woods, calling to them, "Men, men! Indians, Indians!" A shower of arrows sought the barricade, transfixing some of the hanging coats. Fortunately the prudent four who had kept their weapons made good use of them, and some who had armor donned it and with their swords accompanied their comrades in a rush to the bank for the muskets, the Indians racing to intercept them but in vain. The weapons carelessly left were now discharged with a quieting effect, the savages soon retreating, without losses on either side. To increase their fear, the colonists pursued them a little way, shouting and firing. Then, thanking God for their deliverance, they embarked and went up the west shore northward.

It was an uninviting coast. But Robert Coppin encouraged them in the hope of reaching before dark that harbor he had visited, though these were the shortest days of the year and thick weather was setting in fast, followed by snow and rain in the afternoon, a south-east storm rising. Their rudder broke under the strain, and two men were required to steer with oars the heavy shallop, which someone has considered as about thirty feet in length. It was shelterless, without deck or house.

Finally their pilot gave the cheering news that he could discern the harbor. As the daylight was lessening and the tempest increasing, they risked too much sail with the intention of clearing the rocks

at the entrance while they could see. Suddenly the overburdened mast snapped in three pieces and the sail went overboard, nearly capsizing the little vessel. Righting her quickly, and riding in by the oars with the tide aiding, their guide, however, failed to recognize the place in the deepening twilight. Trying to run ashore in the cove of Saquish, the breakers were so huge and thunderous there, that a seaman, wisely foreseeing disaster, protested and they turned away. But soon was heard a gentler wash against some protected beach, to which the oarsmen pulled. Grounding the keel, some of them gladly leaped out, feeling with inexpressible relief the solid strand beneath their feet. The others, remembering the encounter of early morning, remained in the shallop till after midnight, when a bitter clearing wind drove them ashore to the fire which their fellows had managed to kindle. There they all awaited the dawn.

With the welcome day the north-west wind went down, and the sun added its warmth to the fire. They were pleased to find themselves upon an island, and they used that Saturday to dry out their soaked belongings and prepare their muskets, while taking a good look at the harbor. On a rock upon this Clarke's Island, are the words inscribed from their record, "On the Sabboth day wee rested." And with grateful joy they held their customary service, in the shelter of the boulder.

Monday they sounded the harbor, as Bradford re-

lates, and found it fit for shipping. Then they landed, bringing the boat by a large rock, whence they could more conveniently step ashore. The place proved uninhabited, but with desirable clearings, showing signs of rather recent occupancy. Marching about, they discovered the various natural advantages, including a number of brooks. They were satisfied that the location would be suitable for settlement. So passed December 21, our Forefathers' Day.

It was good news which this advance party brought back to the Mayflower, and they all prepared to come to Plymouth, as they called it, because it had already been so named by Captain John Smith a few years before; and thus they also remembered the old Plymouth where they last beheld England, and were kindly entertained.

Sad intelligence, however, awaited William Bradford. His wife Dorothy May, doubtless oppressed with loneliness in his absence, perhaps pensively and by herself looking for his return at the high stern's rail near the ladies' cabins, in weariness and weakness might easily have fallen asleep as in a rolling cradle, especially if seeking the relief of the salt ozone after nausea. In such case losing her balance, she fell overboard and was drowned, probably the stern's height making the water's concussion sufficient to produce instantaneous unconsciousness.

On Christmas Day in our reckoning, the fifteenth in theirs, the Mayflower set sail for Plymouth, but

contrary winds beat her back to her old anchorage. Next day, Saturday, the attempt was successful, barely; for within half an hour after arrival an adverse gale sprang up outside. But the sickle-shaped harbor held them safely. The long voyage was ended at last, a few days before the second decade of the seventeenth century closed.

It went out in a cold rain-storm, with the life of another Pilgrim, for mortality had already commenced. Furious winds and driving rain, again deep snow followed by bitter cold, with consequent increase of sickness, hindered the colonists in their efforts to build log houses there in the dead of winter.

New Year's Day, 1621, a tempestuous Friday, beheld a new-born babe, but unbreathing; and the first Sabbath ashore witnessed the seventh death in America, a toll of the dread Harvester which continued through all that winter, until seven times seven and two more expired, or almost half their whole company, while the Mayflower crew lost in the same proportion of fifty per cent. The vessel was retained till April, not only because adequate habitations could not be constructed soon enough under such fearful circumstances, but because there were not enough sailors in health to man the ship.

Only four of the eighteen wives were spared. Five of the children died, yet fifteen survived. Bradford records concerning the survivors of this perilous enterprise, in uncertain exile compelled by persecution,

"of these in the time of most distress, there was but six or seven sound persons who, to their great commendations be it spoken, spared no pains, night or day, but with abundance of toil and hazard of their own health, fetched them wood, made their fires, dressed their meat, made their beds, washed their loathsome clothes, clothed and unclothed them; in a word did all the homely and necessary offices for them; and all this willingly and cheerfully, without any grudging in the least, showing herein their true love unto their friends and brethren."

This first month of the year and of the Colony brought Bradford himself a severe illness, in which an accident also threatened his life. A month from the original Forefathers' Day "the common house" was completed, where the workers slept and supplies from the ship were deposited. In this building, small like the seven dwellings that followed, lay in weakness Masters Carver and Bradford, one the Pilgrims' first Governor, even from sea-faring days, the other soon to be his successor. Early one Sunday morning the thatch roof caught fire and burned, though the house underneath was saved. The occupants escaped, though not without grave danger from explosion because of powder stored there.

The plan of the little village was laid out January seventh. Its main thoroughfare was simply called the Street, then, successively, First, Great, and Broad Street; but as late as 1823 it took the

name of Leyden. On either side of it, less than a score of plots were set off for the various families. The distribution was by lot, though larger households received larger areas, according to the number of their members. The whole tract was enclosed next year within a stout palisade, about a mile in circuit, after signs of native hostility had made them more watchful than ever. On the hill at the head of the street a wooden fort was built, with which Bradford was said to be much pleased, as it was comparatively large and imposing. On its flat roof ordnance was installed, commanding the whole port. The interior was used for Sabbath congregations, and was the most commodious place for any public assembly.

Almost from the first they had heard now and then a strange clamor on the outskirts, and occasionally they had caught sight of one or more savages lurking about. Several attempts to hold a general meeting had been prevented by the appearance of red men, including an agreeable visit from Samoset, a chief from the north who had learned sufficiently from English fishermen to enable him to converse with the Pilgrims and give them much valuable information. And within a week from that, the head of all the Old Colony tribes, Massasoit, came with about sixty men, forty of whom tarried outside while he and the others approached unarmed into the midst of ready firearms and within the secure walls of a house. Here was offered and received the mutual

covenant of a friendship that proved lasting. Both contracting parties remained ever faithful to this solemn treaty.

After the departure of Massasoit, the colonists held their first full convention, choosing officers and making a few statutes such as were then needed. John Carver, their excellent deacon and the senior of them all, was re-elected Governor, to continue for one year, the regular time limit adopted.

But the Mayflower had not long sailed away, in the middle of April, before Carver succumbed to an early heat, as he toiled with his younger comrades in their planting; and the messenger of death released him from those initial responsibilities, which had weighed heavily upon him. His obsequies were performed with appropriate dignity, the seaside resounding with volleys discharged in his honor above the grave.

Then the reduced Colony assembled again, and voted to place William Bradford in the office vacated by their worthy first leader.

III

THE GOVERNOR: EARLY DUTIES

They are dead, God rest their souls, but their lives are still the strength of ours. . . . Let us stand aside in silent veneration of their heroic characters and achievements, and thank God who strengthened them for labors we cannot even comprehend.

JANE G. AUSTIN, in "Standish of Standish."

All great & honorable actions are accompanied with great difficulties, and must be enterprised and overcome with answerable courages.

WILLIAM BRADFORD.

THE new executive was still handicapped by the weakness of convalescence after his critical illness, though the election had been postponed till he was better; and he was aided by Isaac Allerton, a colonist of means and ability who was chosen as Governor's Assistant. At the chief magistrate's request, five assistants were given him in 1624, and the number was increased to seven in 1633 when his successor Edward Winslow was elected, "Mr. Bradford

having been governor about ten years, and now by importunity got off," as Governor Winthrop of the Massachusetts Bay Colony wrote in his manuscript history of New England. The importunity was Bradford's, not the little Colony's; for he urged rotation of office, saying of the appointment, "If it is any honor or benefit, it is fit others should be made partakers of it; if it is a burden (as doubtless it is), it is but equal others should help to bear it, and this is the end of Annual Elections."

Consequently Thomas Prince, a later settler, was voted to this position in 1634 and '38, and Mr. Winslow again in '36 and '44, three times in all. After that, for thirteen consecutive springs, Mr. Bradford was placed in the gubernatorial chair, and but for his decease then, he would probably have continued long therein. As it was, he held the office thirty full years. And in every instance when his request for a successor was heard, the ballot made him chief of assistants, or Deputy Governor. What clearer evidence could be furnished us, as to the sentiment of the people, both in their small original company and as numbers increased?

His administration exhibited a happy blending of his constitutional mildness and moderation, combined with a firmness that could not be shaken, a patience that would not wear out, and an optimistic hope that was based upon his Christian faith. Offenders against the law and the community's peace felt his determina-

tion, but no one was more ready to pardon the humbled and restore to them the full privileges of citizenship. In matters of diplomacy and difficult correspondence, including delicate foreign relations, he was tactful yet insistent upon principle, defending with a keen sense of justice the honor of the colonial state. Conventional courtesies did not deceive him, where opposition lay concealed; yet he modestly disowned sincere and merited praise when he considered it unwarranted. Scrupulous not to exceed his prerogatives, he was ready to surrender what some in his place would have thought their proper rights. In a word, he did not hold his office anxiously. To him it was not a prize, a dear object for ambition to gain and shrewd policy to perpetuate, even when the Plymouth Colony grew in size and dignity. He mentions his first election only, in particular, adding "once for all," that he was returned "sundry years together."

There was indeed need for strength and calmness; and the unfailing fortitude, coupled with a cool, clear foresight, gave assurance to the people alike during sudden but transient alarms and prolonged periods of impending disaster. Thus their confidence was not disappointed, but was strengthened with every fresh proof. Others had the same high spirit, for it was a noble democracy; but in all such situations courageous leadership cannot fail to have a steadying effect upon the body politic. America did not outgrow

this need, and this benefit, in the later days of Washington and Lincoln. It is not at all strange that in the formative, we may say experimental years of New England, an unpretentious but wise and kind administration should have been gratefully appreciated and sustained, by the popular suffrage annually accorded.

As an instance of Bradford's repeated defense of the Colony in its course of action, this letter may suffice, which was addressed to Weston in answer to the latter's complaint that the Mayflower carried a light return cargo of pelts:

"S^{r}: Your large letter writen to M^{r}. Carver, and dated ye 6. of July, 1621, I have received ye 10. of Novemb^{r}, wherin (after ye apologie made for your selfe) you lay many heavie imputations upon him and us all. Touching him, he is departed this life, and now is at rest in ye Lord from all those troubls and incoumbrances with which we are yet to strive. He needs not my appologie; for his care and pains was so great for ye commone good, both ours and yours, as that therwith (it is thought) he oppressed him selfe and shortened his days; of whose loss we cannot sufficiently camplaine. At great charges in this adventure, I confess you have beene, and many losses may sustaine; but ye loss of his and many other honest and industrious mens lives, cannot be vallewed at any prise. Of ye one, ther may be hope of recovery, but ye other no recompence can make

good. But I will not insiste in generalls, but come more perticulerly to ye things them selves. You greatly blame us for keping ye ship so long in ye countrie, and then to send her away emptie. She lay 5. weks at Cap-Codd whilst with many a weary step (after a long journey) and the indurance of many a hard brunte, we sought out in the foule winter a place of habitation. Then we went in so tedious a time to make provission to sheelter us and our goods, about wch labour, many of our armes & leggs can tell us to this day we were not necligent. But it pleased God to vissite us then, with death dayly, and with so generall a disease, that the living were scarce able to burie the dead; and ye well not in any measure sufficiente to tend ye sick. And now to be so greatly blamed, for not fraighting ye ship, doth indeed goe near us, and much discourage us. But you say you know we will pretend weaknes; and doe you think we had not cause? Yes, you tell us you beleeve it, but it was more weaknes of judgmente, then of hands. Our weaknes herin is great we confess, therfore we will bear this check patiently amongst ye rest, till God send us wiser men. But they which tould you we spent so much time in discoursing & consulting, &c., their harts can tell their toungs, they lye. They cared not, so they might salve their owne sores, how they wounded others."

Two problems quickly confronted the new chief magistrate, and they were surely serious enough: the

problem of a bare subsistence, and of defense against hostile invasion by the natives.

New Plymouth was not new as a plantation. This was the site of the Indian village of Patuxet, whose occupants had worked its somewhat restricted area of tillage, until about four years previously, when they and other settlements of the aborigines were desolated by plague. A survivor of these Patuxets, Tisquantum or Squanto, showed himself to the Englishmen, and became their valued friend and helper. Doubtless glad to return to his old home, he instructed the colonists in the cultivation of the maize, or Indian corn, an indigenous American product which has become appreciated over the world wherever it thrives. It was the Pilgrims' dependence, and a staple article of trade. The wheat and peas they brought with them failed, and without the corn, threatening starvation must soon have closed their career. As it was, during the first two years they had a veritable battle for existence. Though distemper did not return to them after the horrors of the first winter, they became emaciated under reduced rations; but regulations in severity here were merciful, saving the Colony from annihilation, from one planting time to another.

Squanto lightened this task of the authorities by his lessons in hunting venison, snaring rabbits, catching wild fowl, and fishing, especially during the year-

ly herring run in the town brook up to the lovely pond called Billington Sea because its discoverer, young Francis Billington mistook it for a salt inlet.

Also the faithful shallop was in constant use by successive parties, who went out into the bay and came not back without a haul of lobsters, cod, or other fish, though at first they were poorly provided with deep-sea tackle and proper nets. Clams afforded a further help, the people treading and digging the flats at low tide, while eels and crabs supplemented this. They were grateful for these means of nourishment from sea and shore, preventing their extinction; yet such could not suffice for permanent living.

Bradford did all in his power to relieve the shortage of food supply. Little could be procured from abroad, and in the case of a visiting ship, the captain's price was cruelly prohibitive. A generous captain of different character, in a fishing fleet to the north, persuaded his fellows to spare from their own allowance enough to load the Pilgrim boat. But the most of the required amount of corn was obtained by bartering various utensils and beads with the Indians, though their natural improvidence usually left them without much of a surplus in crops. In trading expeditions by land and water, Standish and Bradford were both active. And each of them at times was alone, of white men, among the natives. Brad-

ford once left a boat and walked fifty miles back to Plymouth from the south, for the friendly neighboring tribes were not long in discovering his inherent gentleness and fairness.

But firm discipline was necessary in times of dire need. A few unreliable persons had become mixed in the original company, and colonists new or old were punished by flogging, for the theft of corn, some of which was occasionally abstracted even before it was ripe. Bradford's appreciative quotation of Seneca's fine affirmation, that a man is free who has control of his stomach, in this near famine would seem to apply where self-denial meant malnutrition, to prevent starvation.

Weakness and numerical smallness hindered the cultivation of the soil, and the climax was a severe drouth from the last of May, 1623, till about the middle of July, when the stalks nearly perished in the excessive heat. A day of prayer was appointed, in which the Pilgrims engaged earnestly for eight or nine hours, until a general cloudiness overspread the sky. This was followed that night by a gentle shower, which was renewed again and again, with intervals of sunshine, throughout a fortnight. The planting was saved, to the astonishment of the Indians and the deep gratitude of the Christian community. Famine fled for ever. And as the spared crop matured, a Day of Thanksgiving was ordered by the Governor and concurring Council, a season which

has been observed annually ever since, and finally throughout the nation.

Bradford did not show favor to the industrial policy of holding all things in common, which was at first attempted and which, because of its early apostolic connection, was supposed to be under divine sanction. If he tolerated the idea at first, he gives no sign of approval; and when it was abandoned he observed: "The experience that was had in this comone course and condition, tried sundrie years, and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanitie of that conceite of Plato & other ancients, applauded by some of later times; that ye taking away of propertie, and bringing in comunitie into a comone wealth, would make them happy and flourishing; as if they were wiser then God."

This farsighted judgment applied equally to the communistic concept of that time and the present idea of a short working day, a living wage whether earned or not, and an absolute democratic control over all individual rights, which is the perversion of civil liberty, and more potent than despotism because imposed by a multitude.

Under private ownership of land, which superseded the common stock plan, there was better incentive to toil, and the Governor with pleasure observed that even the women and children went willingly afield. Assignments came to be made of one acre to a family, near the palisaded hamlet for conven-

ience and better security. But on petition of the planters, Bradford directed that the allotments should be for continuous use, rather than for one year as heretofore. This encouraged those who had achieved good success on their area, to go forward still in their agricultural accomplishments. They raised the more, as soon as numbers and strength allowed, because they found a corn market among the half-hundred fishing vessels which annually visited the northern coasts.

The story is familiar, how the distressed newcomers at first smoothed the graves of their plague-smitten members, to hide the number of deaths from the savages, whose derisive shouts from the forests mingled with their lamentations. But this local Indian menace was comparatively slight. All the Cape Indians, including those whom the Pilgrim explorers had unintentionally aroused, became before long their permanent good neighbors. This desirable outcome was facilitated by a singular circumstance, the roaming of a boy who lost his way. John Billington, Jr., wandered in the woods until the Cummaquid Indians found him twenty miles down the coast. They carried him farther, to the Nausets, the very tribe of the first encounter. Bradford sent notice of the missing lad to Massasoit, who inquired for him among his subjects. On ascertaining his whereabouts, ten colonists and two interpreters were dispatched in the shallop to Nauset, who received the boy bead-

laden and well, and held a friendly parley with Chief Aspinet and his men. These natives forwarded peace delegates to Plymouth, a course not actually required but acceptable after their conflict of 1620.

The whole region of Plymouth was offered free and empty to the white men, through the ravages of previous pestilence. This providential visitation extended as far west as the confines of Narragansett Bay in present Rhode Island, depleting the population where it did not wholly destroy. And further, these Pokanokets, the Sunrise tribes in a confederacy under Massasoit, were the more willing to heed their lord's pacific injunctions concerning the English, because they themselves in their weakened condition were threatened with invasion and conquest by the powerful Narragansetts. Self-preservation, as well as commercial advantage, prompted the never broken treaty made that spring. It was an idea mutually welcome, a most happy plan for both afflicted parties. Only one chief, Corbitant in the Taunton valley, was displeased and jealous, and threatened trouble; but a prompt expedition to the interior frightened him away back home. He sued for favor through Massasoit, and affixed his mark below those of eight other chiefs, in a covenant of loyalty to King James across "the big water."

The Rhode Island Indians were irritated by this unprecedented alliance of natives with foreigners, and knowing the English losses they sent the famous

rattlesnake skin with its challenging arrows, to Plymouth. But its speedy return filled with powder and balls and accompanied by a friendly but warning message, punctured their pride and put for a while a complete quietus on their warlike aspirations.

The most serious peril arose in 1623, from the populous Massachusetts tribes along the northern bay which, with the later state, adopted their name. These were never over-friendly, and the later Salem and Boston colonists found their own numerical strength was a needed preventive of further native hostilities after the first had been suppressed. The wrath of the red northerners was fanned into fury by the wicked and abusive conduct of sixty Wessagusset settlers, a worthless and improvident lot which Thomas Weston imposed upon Plymouth in the time of scarcity, until they went up the coast by themselves. Even then Standish, and later Bradford, took command of their pinnace the Swan in attempts to procure corn for distribution in both colonies; and the efficient Squanto died in one of these voyages, despite tender nursing by the Governor.

But the Wessagusset men repaid the terribly taxed hospitality and courtesy of the Pilgrims by attempted thefts of corn and insolent demeanor while at Plymouth; then they provoked their heathen neighbors, with whom they competed in bad behavior; and finally their remnant accepted the guidance of Myles Standish to the fishing fleet off the Maine

coast, whence they returned to England for the good of America.

It was in situations like these that the coolness of the Governor greatly helped to prevent the note of dismay, for the exasperated Massachusetts, in hope of exterminating every foreigner, sent far and near for concerted action of all tribes, and many joined in the conspiracy. In view of an uprising so widespread, it was natural that some in the little Colony should feel apprehensive, for the peril of extinction was real. Approximately between twenty-five and fifty thousand Indians occupied New England. Supported by limited artillery and musketry, the wooden palisade was hardly adequate against the firebrands, hatchets and arrows of bloodthirsty swarming thousands; yet it never came to the test. This is less surprising when we recall the fact that, in addition to showing an almost complete lack of organization, all the Atlantic coast natives were numerically weaker and socially inferior to the inland tribes. White immigrants to the Old Colony found them especially weak there; and in Patuxet, or Plymouth, they were extinct, except for friendly Squanto.

At this time the people revealed their trust in Bradford's judgment by leaving him to decide what measures should be taken in a crisis so acute, of which he informed them on the annual court day. Captain Standish was sent to Wessagusset, with only

eight men, as more would excite suspicion; and they equipped the shallop for trading. But one day when two ringleaders and a couple of followers were in a hut with the whites, Standish gave the word, the door was shut and a struggle ensued, three red men being soon cut down, fighting to the last, while a fourth was taken alive and afterward hung. Three more warriors in the neighborhood were killed. This summary execution of only seven persons quickly prepared the way for finishing the disagreeable but necessary business without that further and abundant bloodshed, which would inevitably have ensued but for this stern action. A force of Indians who hastened to the scene were turned to flight without loss after a few shots, and the heart of opposition failed. The sudden collapse of warfare so carefully planned, is explained not only by the loose organization of those rude folk among themselves, but by the fact, as often in ancient history, that dependence upon leaders was extremely strong, and the fall of a hero caused consternation and despair. Also the terror of Standish, with his decisiveness and daring, was universal among all disaffected natives, who regarded him as invulnerable, for he had repeatedly escaped the plots of intending assassins; and he surprised his foes by his quick penetration of their deadly designs though covered by amicable professions.

This perception of sinister purposes was also well

developed in Bradford, as the following instance will show, though out of chronological order; and it was well for the Colony that both men possessed such a faculty, the impetuous Captain and amiable Governor, who in their respective dispositions may fairly be compared with Christ's leading disciples, Peter and John. When the Massachusetts Bay Colony was at its full inception in 1630, there appeared the greatest threat of native opposition up to that time, considering its extent. It aimed at the annihilation of all New England settlements, north and south along the coast where they had obtained, or were securing, a firm footing. The older community was to be attended to first.

The scheme was to request another grand sporting festival at Plymouth, natives and whites together, such as had been allowed to Massasoit and his men in 1621, the year of the treaty. Though this pleasant precedent was shrewdly cited with all openness and apparent amity, Bradford refused the petition. Then the red men, realizing that they were understood, declared wrathfully and with unwonted boldness, "If we may not come with leave, we will come without."

They rallied near Charlestown, whose people were also warned by their constant native friend, Sagamore John. Therefore the English, including women and children, hastily erected earthworks and built a small fort on top of the town hill. But the slightly

older settlement of Salem made use of what cannon it possessed, and the booming reverberations struck such panic in the dusky breasts, that they immediately abandoned their campaign, although, as later in New England's interior, it might, if once started, have proved no farce even against explosive weapons. Thus ended the troubles with aborigines of martial mind in William Bradford's time.

Within a year, lacking one day, after the Mayflower had cast anchor in Provincetown harbor, the Fortune had brought an accession of thirty-five souls, mostly men, who replaced the male losses of the first winter. They were somewhat heedless youth, with more of adventurous ardor than judgment, yet such as could be controlled, and useful in the shortage of masculine muscle and total absence of horses and oxen. They stood ready for work or warfare, in those uncertain years before colonial establishment. Then, just after the drouth of 1623, the Anne and the Little James arrived in August with sixty persons, some of whom, however, proved so undesirable that the Colony, financially burdened though it was, willingly sent them back at its own charge. The most of them, both Separatists and others, were very worthy and welcome; and they included women and children, who had been left behind until they could expect an assured settlement to occupy. Elder Brewster received his two daughters, Doctor Samuel

Fuller and Francis Cooke rejoiced to greet their wives, and there were brides to be.

Besides these sixty, certain prospective planters were accepted who did not wish to join Plymouth's colonial organization bound in partnership with the company in England. Specifications regarding them were drawn up, and mutually agreed upon. The opening article was thus generous in its spirit:

"First, that ye Govr, in ye name and with ye consente of ye company, doth in all love and frendship receive and imbrace them; and is to allote them competente places for habitations within ye towne. And promiseth to shew them all such other curtesies as shall be reasonable for them to desire, or us to performe."

A letter came with these ships, from the general company in England, subscribed by thirteen names representing those who in that body were friendly toward the Pilgrims and were sending them this accession of people. The missive concluded in this tenor of sympathy and encouragement, which doubtless did the recipients much good:

"Let it not be greeveous unto you y^t^ you have been instruments to breake ye ise for others who come after with less difficulty, the honour shall be yours to ye worlds end. . . .

"We bear you always in our brests, and our harty affection is towards you all, as are ye harts of hun-

dreds more which never saw your faces, who doubtles pray for your saftie as their owne, as we our selves both doe & ever shall, that ye same God which hath so marvelously preserved from seas, foes, and famine, will still preserve you from all future dangers, and make you honourable amongst men, and glorious in blise at ye last day. And so ye Lord be with you all & send us joyfull news from you, and inable us with one shoulder so to accomplish & perfecte this worke, as much glorie may come to Him y^t^ confoundeth ye mighty by the weak, and maketh small thinges great. To whose greatnes, be all glorie for ever & ever."

Edward Winslow was appointed to return with the Anne, for the procuring of needed supplies and especially to report the truth about the Colony, whose enemies had maligned it. This gifted and honorable man rendered a valuable service to Plymouth at that day, and to posterity ever since, by his detailed journal of events to that time, entitled Good Newes from New-England. He and Bradford, unnamed, had previously prepared a Journal of the Plantation through June of the first full year, which was printed in 1622. That and the longer account were embodied in "Purchas his Pilgrims" in 1625.

In the feminine contingent of these latest arrivals, there appeared one who was to share her life for thirty-three years with the Governor of the Old Colony. She was previously well acquainted with

him, and born in the same year. Alice Carpenter was the widow of Edward Southworth a descendant of Sir Gilbert Southworth, knight of Lancaster. When a maiden of seventeen, she had cast in her lot with the Puritans and lived a while as an exile in Holland, with her father. She became a woman of devout mind and great force of character.

Alice must often have seen William Bradford in the Separatist community at Leyden. And in her widowhood, two years after the tragic decease of Dorothy May Bradford, she received with favor his suit for marriage, which was happily consummated at Plymouth on August fourteen, Old Style.

She brought over considerable property with her. Dorothy Bradford's son John, a lad under seven then, did not come till a few years later. He himself though married died childless, after threescore years of life; and he was given the position of Deputy to the General Court, before his father passed away. He received a house and land from a paternal will.

Goodwife Southworth's own sons Thomas and Constant Southworth rejoined her within seven years, meeting their half-brothers, the Plymouth family having then been blessed with three little ones, William, Mercy and Joseph. The Bradford household, of parents and children, therefore comprised eight persons, residing in the Governor's assigned homestead at the south-west corner of the

square in the intersection of the two main streets.

Mrs. Bradford engaged earnestly and long in labors for the young people at Plymouth.

Though she survived her life-partner by nearly thirteen years, he had the joy of knowing some of the fifteen children of his son and namesake William, the Deputy Governor and Major, and several of his other son Joseph's seven children. His only daughter, Mercy, married and was living in 1650. The grandmother's name was repeated in Alice, daughter of William Junior.

Following a long debility, on April 5, 1670, shortly before the dark days of King Philip's war, the Governor's consort closed, at her home of peace, her course of almost fourscore years; and a relative, Nathaniel Morton, Secretary of Plymouth Colony, writing verses which are copied on the first original leaf of Bradford's History, "Upon the life and death of that godly matron Mistris Alice Bradford," said of her that after the obsequies of her husband,

"E'r since that time in widdowhood shee hath
Lived a life in holynes and faith
In reading of God's word and contemplation."

IV

THE GOVERNOR: LATER ADMINISTRATION

In thanking God for the mercies extended to us in the past, we beseech Him that He may not withhold them in the future, and that our hearts may be roused to war steadfastly for good and against all the forces of evil, public and private. We pray for strength and light, so that in the coming days we may with cleanliness, fearlessness and wisdom do our allotted work on the earth.

THEODORE N. ROOSEVELT,
in National Thanksgiving Proclamation.

It is much better to keepe a good conscience and have ye Lord's blessing, whether in life or death.

WILLIAM BRADFORD.

AS Plymouth's third summer displayed its saved harvest which, with a fresh food supply from the Anne, promised enough by prudent management for the increased Colony, a sense of security and content was justified. The new-comers, who had wept to see the founders' leanness and scanty clothing, were glad to help as they could, and consoled their much tried spirits in the reunited and new families. The

lingering experimental stage had passed. Establishment was in sight. With only a few exceptions, every settler had done his part and would continue to do so, toiling for the general good as for his private welfare. The Governor performed his share of responsibility, as he had willingly taken his equal portion in the emergency restrictions. He would not himself avoid in any degree what he had been obliged to impose upon others. And in appreciation of his true democratic feeling they cordially co-operated with him, and were pleased to support him still as their civil head. But an external authority was to try the genuine quality of his humility; and well it stood this test.

The Council for New England, seated in old England, could not long direct affairs at that distance, as only a body subject to the British government and usually having no electoral voice abroad; but before its early expiration it assumed at one time to do more than the Crown itself cared to undertake for Plymouth, which was never of marked political importance to the realm. This ephemeral Council superseded the colonists' head by the appointment of a Governor General of New England, Captain Robert Gorges, son of Sir Ferdinando the famous promoter of provincial territory. On his advisory board was Admiral Francis West, who had unsuccessfully served a monopoly seeking exclusive control of the New England fishing grounds, and one

William Bradford, resident in New Plymouth and generously accorded this favor "for the time being," a copy of his superior's commission being delivered to him. The Pilgrim leader not only accepted the situation, as his duty was, but did so with good grace, providing for the entertainment of Gorges and his considerable company during a fortnight after their arrival in September, an act of hospitality which was acknowledged with thanks.

With the new dignitary were families intended to replace, at Wessagusset, now Weymouth, those who had been there long enough to provoke the natives into the insurrection against all whites.

Before they sailed up the coast, Thomas Weston also came into port, just at the wrong juncture for him. All his fraudulent villainy was charged against him by Robert Gorges, including the wrongs done to the latter's distinguished father. Bradford here displayed his forgiving spirit by interceding in behalf of Weston, though he himself and all Plymouth had suffered because of his actions. Clemency being obtained, Weston thought himself free and, instead of showing gratitude, indulged in the spiteful expressions so congenial to his nature. Thereupon Gorges in righteous wrath vowed he would either curb or banish him; and he would have done so had not Bradford, secretly entreated by the wretch, again procured his release with much difficulty. This and other favors granted to him, when in dire straits or per-

sonal peril, were ignored by Weston, who from a safe distance still proved his inherent depravity by reviling the Pilgrims.

A single American winter sufficed for Gorges and the bulk of the Wessagusset colony. Relinquishing his magisterial powers, necessity compelled him to return home before spring, accompanied by some of his people. Others were carried to Virginia, only a few remaining in Weymouth. Thus quickly terminated the assumption of external, delegated authority at Plymouth as a separate Colony, the British government being usually content to grant, though unofficially and by sufferance, its autonomy, even to the choice of its chief executive, which was not the case at Massachusetts Bay.

In an opportune time when opposition among the English patrons was developing against the New England Separatists, Winslow did his part well in defending, abroad, the Colony from its unfriendly critics, who had misrepresented it from the time of the Mayflower's return with her rough, profane crew, to the reprobate malcontents who had to be deported. And now, when the Charity went back in which Winslow had returned, having left her cargo of necessities such as much needed clothing and cattle for breeding, she conveyed home specific answers by the Governor, to a dozen baseless criticisms. Two are cited, in the loose orthography of the day. Variable spelling was no sure sign of illiteracy then, as with Bradford and

contemporary writers of good thought and dignified style.

Thus he meets the leading calumny, as to "diversitiè about Religion:"

"We know no such matter, for here was never any controversie or opposition, either publicke or private, (to our knowledg,) since we came."

The last objection designed to injure Plymouth was this: "The people are much anoyed with muskeetoes.

"Ans: They are too delicate and unfitte to begin new-plantations and collonies, that cannot enduer the biting of a muskeeto; we would wish such to keepe at home till at least they be muskeeto proofe. Yet this place is as free as any, and experience teacheth that ye more ye land is tild, and ye woods cut downe, the fewer ther will be, and in the end scarce any at all."

Bradford prepared this clear and direct rejoinder to the unjust charges, at the urgent request of the planters' foreign agent. And the unexpected defense "did so confound ye objecters, as some confessed their falte, and others deneyed what they had said, and eate their words, & some others of them have since come over againe and heere lived to convince them selves sufficiently, both in their owne & other mens judgments."

The Governor further justified Plymouth's course by a series of replies, which became useful locally and

for posterity, but were not sent abroad, as the letters of complaint were intercepted and seized. He had now to cope with internal revolt, headed by John Lyford and John Oldham. Lyford was an exceedingly disreputable and discredited clergyman of the Established Church who, like Morell of Wessagusset previously, had been sent in hope of superseding Elder Brewster and breaking up the much disliked Separatist order in New England. Morell had perceived the strength of the Pilgrim fellowship, and was wise enough to make no vain attempt to subvert its order, only daring to mention, on leaving the country, the ecclesiastical authority with which he had been invested. His successor, in this dark scheme of foreign persecution, sought with serpentine cleverness to ingratiate himself; but his effusive servility nauseated those sterling souls. As Bradford graphically recorded, "when this man first came a shore, he saluted them with that reverence & humilitie as is seldome to be seen, and indeed made them ashamed, he so bowed and cringed unto them, and would have kissed their hands if they would have suffered him; yea, he wept & shed many tears, blessing God that had brought him to see their faces; and admiring ye things they had done in their wants, &c. as if he had been made all of love, and ye humblest person in ye world."

Nevertheless, not knowing his reprobate nature, they gave the clerical the best entertainment they

could, a larger allowance from the stored food than any other had, and, "as the Govr had used in all waightie affairs to consulte with their Elder, Mr. Brewster, (togeither with his assistants,) so now he caled Mr. Liford also to counsell with them in their waightiest bussineses." Soon he desired admission to the church, and was received, confessing that his conscience had been troubled by much wrong doing, and professing gratitude for "this opportunity of freedom and liberty to enjoy the ordinances of God in purity among his people."

Oldham also, who had been a malcontent and evil informant to parties abroad, now, to quote again the magisterial historian, "tooke occasion to open his minds to some of ye cheefe amongst them heere, and confessed he had done them wrong both by word & deed, & writing into England; but he now saw the eminente hand of God to be with them, and his blesing upon them, which made his hart smite him, neither should those in England ever use him as an instrumente any longer against them in any thing; he also desired former things might be forgotten, and that they would looke upon him as one that desired to close with them in all things, with such like expressions. Now whether this was in hipocrisie, or out of some sudden pang of conviction (which I rather thinke), God only knows. Upon it they show all readynes to imbrace his love, and carry towards him in all frendlyness, and called him to counsell with them in all

cheefe affairs, as ye other, without any distrust at all."

Thus generous and patient was the Governor and his Pilgrim comrades. They were ready to let a man make amends for his misdeeds. But very soon Bradford had opportunity to show that he had discretion as well as mercy.

Lyford saw no prospect of his becoming the "spiritual" head at Plymouth, although by his encouragement some of the Merchant Adventurers in England succeeded in still keeping the Pilgrims' true pastor from coming to his own, as he desired to do, writing to them concerning his unwilling absence. They even pleaded lack of funds to transport him and Mrs. Robinson, though they could send Lyford with his numerous family. This man and Oldham secretly lapsed back into their congenial ways, and they busied themselves in efforts to stir up discontent and sedition, among those who had been generously allowed residence at Plymouth without assuming the colonial foreign obligations. There were stealthy gatherings and whisperings, which the government discovered. There was industrious writing of letters intended for English consumption.

As the mail carrier sailed, the Governor and several others accompanied her in the shallop until well out, when he called for all the letters of Lyford and Oldham. The ship master, knowing the evil conduct of those men on both sides of the sea, cheerfully co-

operated, finding over a score of vicious epistles, many of them bulky, and full of slanders sufficient to ruin the reputation of the Colony if believed.

At night the Governor returned and nothing was said, the uneasy malcontents concluding Bradford had gone with messages of his own. Instead of this, he waited to see what their intentions were, and who were their adherents, particularly as one of the intercepted letters promised a change in church and state, and that they would bring this about soon after the ship's sailing. Therefore, mistaking the Governor's caution for timidity, without notifying him or the Elder they presumed to call a meeting of the conspirators, on a certain Sunday.

This was what Bradford had been waiting for, to know the disloyal constituency. Swiftly he acted now, summoning the whole company to court. They were urged to state, frankly and fully, all their grievances, in the open and proper manner; but they had nothing to say, and stoutly denied the charges laid against them. Their letters being produced, Lyford was struck dumb; but Oldham began to rage, affecting righteous wrath over the interference with his mail. He called upon his supposed sympathizers to have courage and stand forth, but none of them spoke or moved. The Governor explained to the people the necessity of suppressing mutinous missives; and the assembly was shocked at the produced evidence, of seditious plotting in return for uniform

kindness. The weak and variable Lyford, when some of his voluminous writing was read, suddenly gave way to copious tears, cursing himself and confessing everything, declaring that his actions were the result of his pride, vainglory and self-love, though he involved Billington and others who at once grew emphatic in denial.

By way of illustration, and to show the breadth of the colonial policy, the first two charges, and their refutations, are here given.

"1. First, he saith, the church would have none to live hear but them selves. 2'y. Neither are any willing so to doe if they had company to live elsewher.

"Ans: Their answer was, that this was false, in both ye parts of it; for they were willing & desirous y^{t} any honest men may live with them, that will cary them selves peacably, and seek ye comone good, or at least doe them no hurte. And again, ther are many that will not live els wher so long as they may live with them.

"2. That if ther come over any honest men that are not of ye seperation, they will quickly distast them, &c.

"A. Ther answer was as before, that it was a false callumniation, for they had many amongst them that they liked well of, and were glad of their company; and should be of any such like that should come amongst them."

Sentence of banishment was imposed upon the miserable men, but Lyford's time was extended to six months more at Plymouth in the vain hope that his punishment might be commuted on good behavior. Elder Brewster especially entreated for him, though this strange pulpit aspirant had hoped to supplant him. The clerical renegade's contrition began to cool in a few weeks, and he penned in great secrecy a letter to his backers abroad, which however was brought to the Governor, and all its charges answered in writing. In consequence, there was a revulsion of feeling on the part of certain formerly disaffected ones, who now so loathed these traitorous deeds that their own loyalty was toned up. The Colony was rid of such experts in duplicity, though Oldham rashly returned next spring, and became so defiant and abusive that he was first put under guard, then led away to a boat between files of musketeers who were ordered to strike him with the butts of their guns. Yet afterward in a fearful storm he confessed his wickedness and vowed that if spared he would do right. Delivered from drowning, he kept his word, proved his genuine good will, and behaved himself so well that eventually he had liberty to visit Plymouth when he would. In all these things the toleration of the chief magistrate and his associates, where toleration was possible, appears marvellous, though they were firm in protecting their essential rights and maintaining the colonial integrity.

But the English supporters of the unsuccessful revolution, vexed at the ministerial traitor's expulsion, dissolved their company as then composed, broke with the Colony and thenceforth withheld their help. Also some of them, not content with this, manned a vessel on their own account, and dispatched it ahead of any others to Cape Ann on the north shore, where Plymouth had established a fishing station. This expedition seized the stage and necessary supplies for the Cape Ann industry, and threatened to fight for their possession. Hereupon Bradford sent men to defend their authority, and help build a new drying stage; but those who were left in charge conducted the business so unsuccessfully that it was finally abandoned.

The Governor was now relieved from the chain of crises which had threatened to overthrow the Colony from its beginning. In the fourth year he found himself at the head of about one hundred and eighty people, including approximately a score of persons not in the trading company, together occupying thirty-two dwellings within the stockade. By the tenth year, 1630, Plymouth had grown to about three hundred inhabitants.

When the Merchant Adventurers had failed in their scheme to break up the Pilgrim order in America as in England, and so as a body had deserted Plymouth, four of their former company showed their own faithfulness by sending in 1625, on their own ac-

count, more cattle and clothing. In their accompanying letter, they subscribed themselves, over mere initials, "your assured freinds to our powers." The following extract reveals their desire to impart cheer, as well as good things, to the distant toilers, in whom they also felt confidence.

"Let us all indeavor to keep a faire & honest course, and see what time will bring forth, and how God in his providence will worke for us. We still are perswaded you are ye people that must make a plantation in those remoate places when all others faile and returne. And your experience of Gods providence and preservation of you is such as we hope your harts will not faile you, though your friends should forsake you (which we our selves will not doe whilst we live, so long as your honestie so well appereth). . . . Goe on, good friends, comfortably, pluck up your spirits, and quitte your selves like men in all your difficulties, that notwithstanding all displeasure and threats of men, yet ye work may goe on you are aboute, and not be neglected."

Myles Standish was sent over in hope of persuading the Merchant Adventurers to hold together, with the aid also of the nominally ruling Council for New England. But his earnest efforts met with only partial success, in a time of industrial depression prevalent on account of the fearful pestilence there, together with an uncertain political situation embar-

rassed by rumors of war with France. Nevertheless Bradford recorded for Plymouth, that "in ye mean time, it pleased the Lord to give ye plantation peace and health and contented minds, and so to blese their labours, as they had corn sufficient, (and some to spare to others,) with other foode; neither ever had they any supply of foode but what they first brought with them." He had previously spoken of the provisions brought by the sixty in 1623, but they retained them for their own use, and had no more than what they carried over with them.

After Captain Standish returned from abroad, however, their peace of mind was sorely tested. They learned that their loved pastor, Mr. Robinson, could no more hope to rejoin them, for he had passed away, as also had their capable agent Robert Cushman, who expected soon to come to them. The efficient Sherley was seriously ill, whose initials had led in the joint letter of encouragement the year before. Many of their friends in Leyden likewise were dying, while others lamented that they could not leave Holland for New England. King James too had died, and Charles now reigned. Considering all these important changes, the Governor writes again:

"To looke humanly on ye state of things as they presented them selves at this time, it is a marvell it did not wholy discourage them, and sinck them. But they gathered up their spirits, and ye Lord so helped them, whose worke they had in hand, as now

when they were at lowest they begane to rise againe, and being striped (in a maner) of all human helps and hops, he brought things aboute other wise, in his devine providence, as they were not only upheld & sustained, but their proceedings both honoured and imitated by others."

They went resolutely to work anew, giving their attention to planting and trading. Bradford and Winslow proceeded by boat, with several hands, to Monhegan Island in Maine, where an attempted plantation was about to give up and sell out their trading stock. A good supply of articles being procured, a number of debts were cleared away in consequence, and clothing bought for those who still needed it. Little by little their wants were being met, and actual discomfort prevented.

Also Isaac Allerton was commissioned to go to England the same year Myles Standish came back, and with the assistance of friends over there, a formal agreement satisfactory to the colonists was drawn up and subscribed by forty-two Merchant Adventurers. Thereupon in 1627 Bradford and six or seven other leading citizens ran a large venture and made themselves personally responsible for the eventual purchase, by them and their partners, of the revived English company's interest in the Colony, amounting to eighteen hundred pounds, of which two hundred were to be paid annually at the Royal Exchange in London. Next year, 1628, the transaction

was fully confirmed, with the best legal counsel available; and the first instalment was paid. This gradual settlement was completed three years ahead of time, with the help of a large quantity of beaver skins.

Yet it was ten years beyond the expiration of those creditors' time limit of nine years before the Colony was finally free from heavy indebtedness to other parties in England, so making a financial struggle of a quarter of a century from the landing of the Pilgrims. To the lasting wonder of all who consider them, they exhibited alongside of their piety, a practical business ability and perseverance, which ultimately was not frustrated by reverses such as the seizure of consignments by national enemies, and the loan to themselves of absolutely necessary sums at the fearfully extortionate rate of thirty and even fifty per cent. An indomitable tenacity, and the endurance of rock, reposed in these gentle spirits.

To facilitate commercial progress, Governor Bradford, Captain Standish and other competent men came before the body of colonists, recounted the weight of debt upon them, in this matter of buying out the English company's interest, and offered to undertake the payment of it themselves, instead of merely being responsible for the others; only they asked that they might have the trade of the Colony for six years, after which it was to revert to them all, who were called the generality. The Colony was

to purchase its exemption by yearly delivering to this internal smaller company a specified amount of agricultural products.

This was a hazardous responsibility for the few most concerned, none of whom were persons of real affluence; and yet they felt this was the only feasible way to push trade, unhindered by too cumbrous an organization, in which a number of incapable individuals, and even some less earnest, were sure to be found. Efficiency and resolution were certainly needed; for this little inner company dared to attempt, in two-thirds of the time granted for the full payment of the eighteen hundred pounds, not only the discharge of that encumbrance, but various other obligations devolving upon the plantation, approximating six hundred pounds, or a third of the other sum. It was a bold venture truly, in their still limited circumstances and with the loss of valuable helpers abroad:—to assume liabilities aggregating between two and three thousand pounds, or more specifically, about twelve thousand dollars in our currency. Insignificant enough for a well established community, the load was large for these straitened pioneers in an almost unbroken wilderness, who recently throughout several years had struggled for their very lives. The feebleness of their condition makes their courage colossal.

Yet the Governor and his several partners in this enterprise were no hot-headed speculators, rashly

making chimerical castles in the air, or busily blowing financial bubbles with foolhardy recklessness. They were a brainy group, and the outcome proved their judgment sober. Having by this time some basis of calculation, they took the long look, knew what they were about, and, though purposing to be as prompt as possible, were too cool to be in a hurry. Their sound discretion never failed; and they displayed that rare balance which blends quiet repose of mind with resistless energy.

One fortunate effect of such stress of business burdens was to develop territorial exploitation. To fulfil their purposes, they enlarged the area of their industry. Southward and northward their commerce spread. A small pinnace was built and placed in Monumet river, emptying into Buzzard's Bay. This could be reached by boat from Cape Cod Bay and Scusset river, with some colportage overland between those two streams; so avoiding the dangerous peninsular circumnavigation, and marking the main course of the present Cape Cod Canal. Thus was opened all the lower coast of New England, including the populous Narragansett Bay; access was given to the mouth of the Connecticut River, with its fair valley intersecting the country; and the approach was unimpeded, through Long Island Sound, to the New Netherlands. Here was trading ground indeed, all the way to the promising harbor at the Hudson's mouth and the seat of the mighty metropo-

lis to be. This southern enterprise brought substantial returns.

Also in the north, a store house was put up on the Kennebec River, where Augusta, the capital city of Maine, should afterward arise. The Council for New England, over the signature of its president the Earl of Warwick, made out a patent to William Bradford, granting territory thirteen miles on the River, and extending fifteen miles on either side. Business there did so well at first, that the American debtors gained headway, until a disappointing agent abroad occasioned trouble by private competition. After carrying on trade for ten years, they leased the post for one-sixth of its profits, so receiving some regular income thence.

In 1629 another Mayflower vessel brought to Plymouth thirty-five more Pilgrims from Leyden via the new settlement of Salem, and later a smaller number followed, but poorer and less capable, though worthy persons all. This serious matter, resulting partly from the indiscretion of friends, incurred an expense for transportation, new clothing and considerable maintenance, to the amount of over five thousand dollars in our money. The bulk of it was borne by several new partners in England; yet Plymouth's share was equivalent to a thousand dollars or a little more, which was never repaid to the Colony or even demanded back, and became a chief cause of Plymouth's indebtedness during its first quarter of

a century. Commenting on this final extra burden from abroad, Bradford thus expresses his wonder "that these poor people here in a wilderness should, notwithstanding, be inabled in time to repay all these ingagments, and many more unjustly brought upon them through the unfaithfulness of some, and many other great losses which they sustained, which will be made manifest, if ye Lord be pleased to give life and time. In ye mean time, I cannot but admire his ways and workes towards his servants, and humbly desire to blesse his holy name for his great mercies hithertoo."

Even more than the intricacies of financial entanglements, the responsibilities of diplomacy rested in large measure upon the colonial leader. He had to deal not only with the unsympathetic home government in England, but at one time with Dutch pretensions in New England, which emanated from Fort Manhattan on the future site of New York City. Perceiving clearly that they possessed a place of immense natural advantage, the desire of these Hollanders was enlarged, to extend their area, both commercially and politically, from this safe and promising base. They therefore sent letters to Plymouth in its seventh year, the year of the trading station's establishment near Buzzard's Bay on the south.

Correspondence opened with this ample salutation as rendered in English:

"Noble, honorable, wise and prudent Lords, the Governor and Councillors residing in New Plymouth, our very good friends."

Bradford replied with an equally cordial tone, in which lay no lack of sincerity:

"To the Honoured, &c.

"The Govr & Counsell of New Plim: wisheth, &c. We have received your letters, &c. wherin appeareth your good wills & frendship toward us; but is expressed with over high titls, more than belongs to us, or is meete for us to receive. But for your good will, and congratulations of our prosperitie in these smale beginings of our pore colonie, we are much bound unto you, and with many thanks doe acknowledge ye same; taking it both for a great honour done unto us, and for a certaine testimony of your love and good neighborhood."

After this modest beginning of his message, one discerns in the next sentence, underneath its tenor of genuine amity, a deep note of well disguised warning, that no open question exists in the matter of mutual territorial relations. Thus the subordinate and latent inference is couched, almost like some unintended meaning which nevertheless carries more weight than with a studied significance; for Bradford's very honesty itself was his constant safety:

"Now these are further to give your Wor^{pps} to understand, that it is to us no smale joye to hear,

that his majestie hath not only bene pleased to confirme y^{t} ancient amitie, aliance, and frendship, and other contracts, formerly made & ratified by his predecessors of famous memorie, but hath him selfe (as you say) strengthened the same with a new-union the better to resist ye prid of y^{t} comone enemy ye Spaniard, from whose cruelty the Lord keep us both, and our native countries."

Following the adroit but legitimate suggestion, that their harmony is the more desirable in view of their natural foes, he concludes with this reminder of their former happy concord in Holland:

"Now forasmuch as this is sufficiente to unite us togeather in love and good neighbourhood, in all our dealings, yet are many of us further obliged, by the good and curteous entreaty which we have found in your countrie; haveing lived ther many years, with freedome, and good contente, as also many of our freinds doe to this day; for which we, and our children after us, are bound to be thankfull to your Nation, and shall never forgett ye same, but shall hartily desire your good & prosperity, as our owne, for ever."

Notwithstanding these veiled admonitions, the Dutch sent further epistles, asserting now a claim over English territorial and trade rights, and declaring that they would defend the claim. Yet the Plymouth Governor's versatile mind and ready tact

were equal to this new crisis, delicate as it was, and fraught with momentous possibilities. There was considerable correspondence, and mutual insistence, though always with conventional courtesy of language. Bradford preserved part of these diplomatic communications in his Letter Book. He remained firm in the English title, knowing the ground therefor, and requested the Manhattan magistrates to refer to their own home government, while he deprecated any future trouble to them from the British crown.

In the conclusion of one of his missives he offers this advice:

"We desire your Honours, that ye would take into your wise and honorable considerations, that which we conceive may be a hindrance to this accordation, and may be a means of much future evil, if it be not prevented, namely, that you clear the title of your planting in these parts, which his Majesty hath, by patent, granted to divers his nobles and subjects of quality; least it be a bone of division in these stirring evil times, which God forbid: We persuade ourselves, that now may be easily and seasonably done, which will be harder and with more difficulty obtained hereafter, and perhaps not without blows; so there may be assured peace and good correspondence on all parts, and ourselves more free and able to contract with your Honours. Thus commending our

best service to our most noble Lords, praying for the prosperous success of your worthy designs, we rest your Lordships'

Most sincerely affected and bounden,

William Bradford,

Governour, &c.

Plymouth, Oct. 1, Anno 1627."

This seemed to be enough. They desisted from such designs as might not be deemed "worthy" by the benevolent English Governor, and for which he did not say he might pray. The unwarranted question was dropped, as to the Dutch prerogative.

Nevertheless next year the Manhattan correspondent, Secretary Isaac de Rasier, came to the Monumet station with trumpeters and a retinue, and was conveyed to Plymouth by a boat sent to meet him. After several days' entertainment, he returned to his ship under escort, having been permitted to accomplish his unprofessed purpose, to observe the condition of the fortified English Colony, of which he delivered a description, still extant, to his superiors at New Amsterdam.

In 1633 Bradford also sustained the British claim in the Connecticut valley above the Hollanders' holdings, sending a vessel up the river to the navigable limits, past the threatening Dutch fort at Hartford, and establishing a trading post at present Windsor. Both New Amsterdam and Massachusetts had re-

peatedly encouraged them to do this, but repented. This mercantile base was embarrassed by a widespread plague among the Indians, most of whom were unfriendly. After this reverse it was taken up by a party from Dorchester and, on Bradford's protest, only a sixteenth share in it was returned to Plymouth. The matter caused some feeling in the Old Colony toward its newer northern neighbor. Such rivalries and questions of debate between the two English sections made evident the need of the intercolonial union which later arose. Harmony was sought and usually prevailed.

Captain John Endicott, the new Governor of Massachusetts Bay residing at Salem, proceeded promptly to recognize Plymouth's head in this truly fraternal manner (his spelling modernized):

"To the worshipful and my right worthy friend, William Bradford, Esq. Governor of New Plymouth, these.

"Right Worthy Sir,

"It is a thing not usual, that servants to one master and of the same household should be strangers; I assure you I desire it not, nay to speak more plainly, I cannot be so to you: God's people are marked with one and the same mark, and sealed with one and the same seal, and have for the main one and the same heart, guided by one and the same spirit of truth; and where this is, there can be no discord, nay, here must needs be sweet harmony; and the same request

(with you) I make unto the Lord, that we may, as Christian brethren, be united by an heavenly and unfeigned love, bending all our hearts and forces in furthering a work beyond our strength with reverence and fear, fastening our eyes always on him that only is able to direct and prosper all our ways."

In the following summer of 1629 the sincere and cultured pastors at Salem, Higginson and Skelton, though ordained clergymen, wished to be set apart anew. To this religious assembly William Bradford and other delegates from the Plymouth church were invited. Adverse winds delayed their arrival by sail, and even the days of the stagecoach were then in the future; but happily they were in time to give the right hand of fellowship to their brethren of the Bay.

The closely allied civil and religious interests of the time were further promoted between north and south, under Governor John Winthrop, in his third year at Boston, the new and growing colonial seat. This excellent man wished to visit his gubernatorial brother, Bradford, and associates. There had been great sickness at Boston in its beginning, as in Plymouth at first, though proportionately not so severe in the colony which started with much better numbers. These Bostonians in their crisis bought every available commodity from Plymouth, and for cattle they exchanged horses. Thus by their very exigencies, a good degree of commercial intercourse and brotherly regard was facilitated.

With Governor Winthrop went the Boston pastor, Reverend John Wilson, and two other companions. Their journey was partly by water and latterly by land. Informed of their coming, a party headed by Governor Bradford and Elder Brewster hastened forth to meet them in the evening, and attended them into the town. During their stay of some days, they received the best entertainment that could be given them, at the executive residence and other homes. And when they returned, they were accompanied for some distance on their way, Bradford having his horse carry Winthrop.

The Boston chief dignitary, historian of Massachusetts Bay as Governor Bradford was of Plymouth, wrote of the Sabbath which he and his comrades spent with their Pilgrim brethren. At that time Roger Williams, afterwards the devoted missionary and pioneer among the Rhode Island Indians, was living at Plymouth for a couple of years, and was mentioned by Winthrop in his narration, as was Reverend Ralph Smith, first pastor there for a short time, a good but mediocre man. Thus the record reads, in modern spelling:

"On the Lord's Day was a sacrament, which they did partake in; and in the afternoon Mr. Roger Williams, according to their custom, propounded a question, to which their pastor, Mr. Smith, spoke briefly. Mr. Williams prophesied the topic he had submitted; and after, the Governor of Plymouth spoke to the

question; after him, the Elder; then some two or three more of the congregation. Then the Elder desired the Governor of Massachusetts and Mr. Wilson to speak to it, which they did. When this was ended, the deacon, Mr. Fuller, put the congregation in mind of the contribution, upon which the Governor and all the rest went down to the deacon's seat and put into the bag, and then returned."

Edward Winslow also once described another feature of their worship:

"We refresht ourselves . . . with synginge of Psalmes, making joyfull melodie in our hartes, as well as with ye voice, there being manie in ye congregation verie experte in musick."

V

THE GOVERNOR: LAST ACTS

I venture the prophecy that for countless years to come and to untold thousands these mute pages shall eloquently speak of high resolve, great suffering and heroic endurance made possible by an absolute faith in the over-ruling providence of Almighty God.

Governor Roger Wolcott of Massachusetts, at the Bradford History Presentation, May 26, 1897.

Quae patres difficillime adepti sunt nolite turpiter relinquere.

(*What the Fathers with greatest difficulty effected do not basely abandon.*)

Inscription on the monument of William Bradford at Plymouth.

Sicut patribus, sit Deus nobis.

(*As with the Fathers, so may God be with us.*)

Seal of Boston.

IN their personal visitation the colonial leaders had opportunity to confer on matters of mutual interest, before there was any thought of their respective territories becoming merged indissolubly

into a noble Commonwealth. In 1630 Bradford had received in his name a patent, which ten years later the Plymouth court requested to have; but on his ready compliance, it returned the same at once to him, to whom and his heirs it had been made out by the authorities in England. This charter specified the area of the Old Colony, which, under the jurisdiction of Plymouth, extended from Scituate, considerably below Boston harbor, to Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island, with Cape Cod on the east. Not long after this it included ten towns.

Soon a decided forward step was taken, toward unity. In September 7, 1643, a confederation was formed, composed of the colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut and New Haven, and named The United Colonies of New England. Probably this coalition was in the minds of those who founded the United States of America. There are similarities in the very constitutions of the two governmental organizations, small and large. The four colonial sections were associated on a basis of political equality. A federal congress was formed, there being two representative delegates from every Colony, who were called commissioners, with one of them presiding. William Bradford was four times a commissioner from Plymouth; and twice he was chosen president, the second time in 1656, the last full year of his life.

The preamble to this federal constitution thus

commences: "Wheras we all came into these parts of America with one and ye same end and aime, namly, to advance the kingdome of our Lord Jesus Christ, & to injoye ye liberties of ye Gospell in puritie with peace; and wheras in our setling (by a wise providence of God) we are further disperced upon ye sea coasts and rivers then was at first intended, so y^t^ we cannot, according to our desires, communicate in one governmente & jurisdiction;—"

This union was highly desirable, from considerations foreign and domestic. The supreme home government was in a condition of uncertainty suggestive of either radical change or revolution itself; and so it would be less able to attend to its provinces in case of need. And need might be at any time, with rival neighboring colonies under other national flags, and with the growing realization of the savages that if they wished for their former independence they must fight for it, soon or never. These facts were plainly perceived in the English settlements, with their loose and informal interconnection of only national and religious sympathy.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony, beginning at Salem, had been powerfully augmented at Charlestown and Boston in the summer of 1630, by the arrival of its Governor John Winthrop and others who were soon followed by the New England fleet of no less than ten more vessels carrying about fifteen hundred colonists. The great natural facilities of Bos-

ton harbor and its environments encouraged a steady and numerous immigration, so that in 1643, the year of confederation, it is estimated that five times as many were found there as in the Old Colony. Connecticut comprised now about the same number as the latter, three thousand, and New Haven half a thousand less. Numerically, therefore, the English in New England were not yet strong. Yet they were constantly growing in this and every respect, having now nearly fifteen thousand acres of grain and a thousand acres in gardens and orchards, with two thousand cattle and three thousand sheep.

The limited body of legislators in this confederation, was composed, however, of truly representative men. And Bradford had much previous experience in law. The first few and simple statutes of Plymouth were revised and enlarged in 1636, when eight delegates, representing also Duxbury and Scituate, cooperated with the Governor and his seven assistants.

The seal of authority which he was accustomed to use was a double eagle. He was Chief Justice, Speaker of the General Court, which granted him a double vote, and Auditor of the Treasury, all these functions being, however, on a scale so limited as to forbid what in larger setting would seem an excess of prerogatives. The record of the 1621 meersteads are in his hand, as was the lost register of early deaths, marriages and punishments.

Bradford felt keenly the numerical loss of Ply-

mouth colonists who went out to form new communities. Everywhere the pioneer mood was for expansion. In this way he was also deprived of a group of able men. Yet they remained mostly in the Old Colony, except Edward Winslow, who finally returned to England. In the year of colonial union Elder Brewster passed away, who had been not only a most worthy and acceptable preacher and virtual pastor at Plymouth, but a close adviser to the Governor, even as he had been the counsellor of his youth. The efficient military head, Myles Standish, was released by death from further responsibilities in 1656; and Bradford survived him only into the next year, having still the company of the public-spirited and helpful John Howland, of the remaining Mayflower Pilgrims.

Many of the best people of England were leaving for America. Much alarm was felt by the home government on this account, in whose eyes colonial New England always represented protest. The former vacillated between aggression and hesitating aloofness toward this uncomfortable element of dissent, exceedingly vexed at such persistent survival and vigorous increase, and yet recognizing its most promising contribution to the strength of the realm. But always again, where royalty wavered, or on the other hand in desperation leaped to violent opposition, the prelacy was close behind it with an urgency which often bordered upon dictation.

Of course the exception to this otherwise uniformly uncongenial Anglo-American interrelation was the regime of the Commonwealth. Had Cromwell sat on the throne of George IV, we would undoubtedly have been a lower Canada for a period of time difficult to delimit. It has been aptly stated that the Oriental idea of conquest was without incorporation, the Roman idea was conquest with incorporation but without representation, and the English idea of empire building was incorporation with representation. This is eminently true as regards England, to her credit be it said. And herein was her folly in forcing the American Revolution, because at that time she fell from her own ideals, which have so signally succeeded in the policy of practical colonial autonomy, vastly promoting her beneficent power.

This happy principle of provincial administration was not yet developed in the seventeenth century, which was a season of preparation for the stupendous blunder of the eighteenth, perpetrated by a headstrong despot without the sympathy of his own home people or a large part of Parliament. The root of the trouble then was taxation without representation, and England learned a valuable lesson after quite an awkward experience. But regal antagonism found its provincial object in religious dissent as early as 1634, when a warrant was issued to stay several vessels about to sail for America. In King Charles' reign, three ships were assigned to convey a governor

and bishops to the west. Massachusetts was greatly stirred up in regard to this, forts were ordered built, and resistance was meditated. The program of absolutism lagged. Nevertheless it looked like a critical juncture, before the tension was relieved by the rise of revolution in Scotland, which resulted in the monarch's dethronement and decapitation. The lords accepted the colonists' petition, and gave forth that they did not intend to curtail their liberties.

The New England Federation was an unprofessed Declaration of Independence. Their virtual assertion of popular sovereignty was temporarily smothered by imported tyranny in the shape of Sir Edmund Andros. Yet the people's power slowly continued to grow, and the erection of Harvard College was a mighty factor in the process before a decade had passed in the Bay Colony. Thither Plymouth sent her youth of promise.

The claim is presumably warranted, that the unsought but unchanging popular choice of the chief executive, this cordial will of the Plymouth people as a body, occasioned the later departure of individuals or small groups of citizens who might wish to give exercise to political aspirations, where fresh settlements offered more room for choice without a solid constituency for any one favorite. The Plymouth voters were the more ardent for their man, because he returned the patent which, if strictly interpreted by the old English law, would make him Lord of the

Manor and the colonists his tenants. In the essential democracy of the American community, he would be the last person to use the anciently established privilege; but evidently because of the technical possibility the Court finally requested him to surrender his charter, and then, pleased at his ready compliance, as promptly restored it. They knew him beyond all doubt, after that transaction of 1640 if not before.

His long continued term is especially noteworthy when we reflect that he was upheld as an ideal leader by a company of citizens who were ethically most exacting. They were peers of the best in all human society, and to satisfy such was indeed a compliment. At the same time, men and women of their excellent type, speaking at least for those of the church considered in their civic order, were too noble to need the ordinary repressions incident to the task of governing. Except for the necessary form and precedent, their moral grandeur required no governor.

Though he wrote against the sectaries with their sinister politico-religious designs or wishes, he did not drive them out unless actual treason developed. The Pilgrims realized they were themselves exiles from intolerance. Yet there was a degree of intolerance after Bradford passed out from Plymouth, and what bigotry was discoverable in Boston then was felt somewhat at the older settlement. The successor of Carver, like most of his associates, was

also free from superstition, placing no credence in the supernatural omens of comets and celestial bodies.

It was his understood duty to entertain strangers, especially visiting officials. The Jesuit Driulette spoke afterward of his kindness, noting also that as host on Friday, he served an excellent dinner of fish.

At least seven orphans, but probably many more, at one time or another found refuge beneath his roof. Robert Cushman, the Pilgrim agent who died after valued services abroad, requested that his son Thomas might receive a father's care from Bradford, and the latter brought him up with such faithful training that eventually his charge became Elder Brewster's successor. To cite one further instance of his kindness, in 1644 Bradford wrote to his wife's sister, Mary Carpenter, inviting her to come to them though they had grown old, as he said. She accepted and lived with them in such tranquillity, as a devout maiden lady, that she survived till past ninety.

The Plymouth town meetings were held at first in the Governor's house. But in at least two of the years when relieved by a successor in office and sometimes during his gubernatorial term as in 1643, the more strenuous first year of Federation, he occupied his house and farm of three hundred acres in present Kingston, which he owned as early as 1637, above the Jones River. He was among its explorers

who took such a liking for the locality that they were tempted to establish the settlement there; but the stream ran shallow at ebb tide, and the surrounding woods rendered the situation more unsafe. In this quiet summer retreat he must have found more leisure to pen much of his careful History. When that had ended, by 1647, tenants occupied the farm, and he is thought to have returned to town.

The inventory of his property specifies "the old mare," possibly when in her prime the one he caused Governor Winthrop to mount, while the latter's party were escorted forth after visiting Plymouth, the departure being probably fully as ceremonious as when they were conducted to town after nightfall. Two horses besides, and a couple of colts are cited, with twenty-six head of cattle of various ages, and sheep and swine. He was the largest property holder, Standish rating next. At his decease he was worth about nine hundred pounds.

He possessed considerable real estate in Plymouth centre, particularly the area between the Hill and Main Street, and across on the site of Pilgrim Hall. An orchard and garden adjoined his town residence.

The house concerned with the inventory of his estate shows how far superior the executive residence must have been, to the original log cottages. The long list of articles in the inventory is available to those interested in all the minutiæ. Every item has its valuation. The old parlor's furnishings head this

attractive catalogue of the contents of his home, and imagination is not greatly taxed to see the possessor there.

This reception room includes the green rug, quite likely the same as that early mentioned, and a white one, table and cupboard and settle, a smooth-grained "wainscot" bedstead and feather bed, and among the chairs a large leather one and great wooden ones, with muskets, a pistol and a cutlass.

We pass in thought to "the great Rome," over three striped carpets and amidst chairs, great and small; and here may have been the public functions, as the annual meeting.

In "the new chamber," among articles of clothing picture two suits with silver buttons, one of them leaden-colored, garments of sufficient distinction for a magistrate, as are a coat of broadcloth, a well used violet-colored cloak and dignified old green gown. A black hat and colored one are mentioned without allusion to age. Fourteen pairs of shoes appear, and one hundred and thirteen yards of different cloth.

The family hospitality is evinced by sixty-four pewter pieces, some silverware and a few Venetian glasses, four dozen trenchers, and kitchen utensils of brass and iron.

Among many things in the "studdie" are his desk, presumably the witness of an incalculable amount of official business, and seven small moose skins for the

silent tread. There is a good collection of books, though the most of them were passed on in his lifetime, especially to his son William who possessed the father's fondness for Latin and inherited those classical treasures. But the Governor retained to the last various historical and theological works, among which were Luther's commentary on Galatians, Calvin on Genesis, a history of the Church of the Netherlands, and Cotton's concordance. A volume on "domesticall dutyes" is cited, to the accomplishment of which attest two spinning wheels. Mrs. Bradford certified to this appraisal.

The will was made May 9, Old Style, the very day of his decease, when he "feeling himself very weake and drawing on to the conclusion of his mortal life spake as followeth." In the beginning of this testament he was described as "weake in body but in p^{pct} memory," and he named the sole executrix as "my dear and loving wife Alice Bradford."

Thus the dictated statement closes: "I commend to your wisdome some small bookes written by my owne hand to bee improved as you shall see meet. In speciall I comend to you a little book with a black cover, wherein there is a word to Plymouth and a word to Boston and a word to New England with sundry useful verses."

The family record, from Governor Bradford's birth, was contained in a Bible printed 1592 in old English.

Posterity is vastly indebted to William Bradford as the resident historian of Plymouth Colony, throughout its first quarter of a century. His narration of the Pilgrim story begins almost with the seventeenth century, before the exodus to Holland. He makes no entries beyond 1646, although, in the same neat handwriting, these dates are added—"Anno 1647. And Anno 1648." Similarly, 1639 and '40 had been joined together, the author expressing his opinion that they did not cover enough matters of importance for separate treatment. But two years after the last date mentioned in the main volume, he concludes an Appendix with these words:

"And of the old stock (of one & other) ther are yet living this present year, 1650, nere 30 persons. Let the Lord have ye praise, who is the High Preserver of men."

In the opening chapter, we find on a reverse page a note dated during that last year of the continuous record, 1646, wherein he says—"when I first begane these scribled writings (which was aboute ye year 1630, and so peeced up at times of leasure afterward)." It would seem that no season of sufficient leisure arrived even to begin, before that strenuous first decade had nearly elapsed.

It is consistent with the unfailing humility that graced the people's chosen and beloved leader that, although as such he necessarily had a most important part in the affairs of the Colony, he speaks of his of-

ficial self, when this is unavoidable, in an impersonal manner only; and he rather rarely introduces the pronoun "I," or even its inclusive plural "we," but usually employs the third person.

The language of this monumental work is that of a careful recorder, plain and unaffected, having a lucid simplicity combined with the replete vocabulary of a reflective literary mind. The style is dignified and chaste, neither labored nor strained. Its fluent grace and ease of diction compels and sustains the interest of the reader, whatever page he may peruse. It is a model specimen of Elizabethan literature. The account proceeds with a thoughtful deliberation and river-like momentum of progressiveness. One realizes the faithful and honest comprehensiveness of his memory's scrutiny, obeying the habitual call of his conscience, which would not allow him the transcription of untruths under any circumstances. His review "of Plimoth Plantation" is well worthy of its place as New England's first historical record of considerable extent, following Edward Winslow's fascinating journal of the three initial years.

It is the privilege of everyone to look upon this hoary manuscript, bound in its time-worn parchment, and exhibited under glass in a specially prepared strong case upon its nightly enclosing iron safe at the Massachusetts State Library. The volume is a folio less than a foot long, nearly eight inches wide, and an inch and a half in thickness, having two hun-

dred and seventy pages. At the outbreak of the Revolution the priceless treasure disappeared and was long lost; but finally, in 1855, it was found and identified in the library of the Bishop of London. Just when and how it reached its destination there, remains a mystery. The British occupation of Boston would make its seizure easy, and the home government may have desired it for official entries. Senator George F. Hoar of Massachusetts, who said of the classic document, "There is nothing like it in human annals since the story of Bethlehem," voiced to Sir Frederick Temple, Bishop of London, the earnest desire of the Commonwealth and the Federal administration for its return. The Bishop recognized the justice of the request, but considered it necessary or advisable to consult Queen Victoria and Dr. Benson, who was Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of the Established Church of all England. But directly the venerable and scholarly Dr. Temple himself succeeded to the supreme ecclesiastical office at Canterbury; and in response to a formal request from the United States Ambassador, Hon. Thomas F. Bayard, the cherished tome was conveyed to America in 1897, and received by Governor Roger Wolcott, a lineal descendant of Governor Bradford. The formal presentation at the State House made an impressive occasion, with memorable addresses. Such, briefly stated, is the singular history of the History.

Two other literary properties of Bradford also

disappeared. His Pocket Book was preserved long enough to furnish the chronologist, Rev. Thomas Prince of Boston, with many dates of great importance, and other material of incalculable use.

His Letter Book was a large volume containing copies of letters in regard to the Colony's affairs. Such a collection of reproduced missives betokened the carefulness and preparedness of the possessor. A fragment of it was discovered in a Halifax grocery, and published by the Massachusetts Historical Society. Six of these letters found were written by Bradford alone, and three jointly. They were mostly official. Appended to this correspondence file was the Governor's interesting description and short historical review of New England, written in metre and rhyme.

Though we who speak of William Bradford as our Forefather should not be moved by pride, as no man is responsible for his own birth, it causes in us profound gratitude that we can affirm our relationship to one who has been called the first great American. Men of renown before his day, a few of them, had a touch with this country, as the very conspicuous connections of famous discoverers; but the epithet applies to him as a continuous resident of the land. His life and labors were permanently given to it as his adopted abode, for he never left it from the day of his coming in the prime of his manhood. In what,

let us ask, did his greatness consist? Others shared in heroic faithfulness, to the limit of their powers or opportunities. His was the magnitude of an immovable fidelity joined with marked ability, though, as with Washington, his mental genius was not the most brilliant. But he carried well and long exceedingly weighty responsibilities.

When has a combination of so many most critical problems confronted a magistrate? Weakened by disease which threatened utter extermination, the Colony encountered a tedious period of famine; it was menaced by hostile savage tribes stronger than the friendly natives; the malevolence of foreign persecution plotted the overthrow of its chosen religious order; treason sprang up in its midst; a staggering weight of financial obligations, made heavier by accidents and outrageous injustice, lay upon them for a quarter of a century; and the seventh problem, which stayed by the Governor till his final release, was that presented by the frequent loss of citizens attracted by new settlements, a circumstance so serious that the question of moving the whole Colony was raised as late as 1644. In all the arduous activities occasioned by these facts, he possessed the quality of steady endurance. His soul was reposeful in energy, while his underlying faith made him an optimist but not a visionary, and lent both basis and balance in his working.

To Bradford also belongs the singular honor of being the first ruler to demonstrate, with his associates, true Christian democracy, not exaggerated into communism, as a successful principle of government.

Peaceful was his departure, from the scene of his colossal tasks. He last presided at court February 13, 1657. The annual meeting in March found him absent. But though his health declined for a few months, to be followed by a sudden and acute disease in May, the end came soon. One night he was so moved with anticipations of the hereafter, that he said in the morning to those about him, "The good Spirit of God has given me a pledge of my happiness in another world, and the first-fruits of eternal glory." About nine o'clock on the next day, May 19, after he had dictated his will, his breathing ceased.

His endeared form was laid to rest in the brow of the gently swelling eminence which overlooks the site of his homestead of thirty-six years and the blue bay seemingly meeting the heavens beyond the harbor, suggestive of the final voyage to scenes of yet nobler liberty. His obsequies were observed with fitting dignity, accentuated by resounding volleys. The distinguished clergyman, Cotton Mather of Boston, wrote in eulogy, that he was "lamented by all the colonies of New England as a common father to them all."

Let his own simple verses summarize his career.

"From my years young in days of youth,
God did make known to me his truth,
And call'd me from my native place
For to enjoy the means of grace.
In wilderness he did me guide,
And in strange lands for me provide.
In fears and wants, through weal and woe,
A pilgrim, past I to and fro;
Oft left of them whom I did trust;
How vain it is to rest on dust!
. . . . . .
Wars, wants, peace, plenty, have I known;
And some advanc'd, others thrown down.
. . . . . .
When fears and sorrows have been mixt,
Consolations came betwixt."

And thus, foreseeing his taking away, he gave his blessing:

"Farewell, dear children whom I love,
Your better Father is above:
When I am gone, he can supply;
To him I leave you when I die.
Fear him in truth, walk in his ways,
And he will bless you all your days.
My days are spent, old age is come,

My strength it fails, my glass near run:
Now I will wait, when work is done,
Until my happy change shall come,
When from my labours I shall rest,
With Christ above for to be blest."

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